MSP for jute

2518. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced any support price for jute procurement in the current year;

(b) if so, what is that and how to implement that decision; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, the Government has announced the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for TD-5 grade of Jute Ex-Assam at Rs. 850/- per quintal for 2002-03 season. Corresponding MSPs for other grades/varieties have also been fixed by the Government. Jute Corporation of India (JCI), a central nodal agency has been authorised to undertake price support operations if market prices of jute fall below MSP level.

Boost to biotech research in Seeds Policy

2519. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new National Seeds Policy is likely to give a big boost to research in biotechnology by involving the private sector with the aim of hiking India's share in the global trade in seeds from 1 per cent to 10 per cent;

(b) whether investment in biotech research would enable higher productivity, greater nutrition value and shorter crop period; and

(c) if so, what are Government's plans to exploit this untapped potential, in order to achieve a higher level of food security and increased exports of agricultural product?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The National Seeds Policy, 2002 provides for the establishment of an effective *sui generis* system for intellectual property protection in order to stimulate investments in research and development in frontier sciences, including